FIVE NATIONS
NATCHITOCHES
NIPISSINGS
APALACHES
ABENAKIS
PEORIAS
HURONS
SIOUX

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French Missions in North America

The Endeavors, Accomplishments, Martyrdoms of the French Missionaries in the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries

by
Leo F. Ruskowski, S.S.

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By

LEO F. RUSKOWSKI, S.S.

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1.

French Missions in North America

1. The progress of the American Missions in foreign fields gives us a picture of the work of our priests who have dedicated their lives to this endeavor. Though the United States ceased being considered a missionary country only in 1908, yet how much and how vast has been the work of our fellow countrymen in the field afar! Just as the missionary enterprise of Americans has grown, so too did the work of the European missionaries in North America increase and spread a few centuries ago. Those men of Europe had a strong faith and a deeply rooted conviction that they must undertake to spread the Faith in order to carry out Christ's injunction, "Go and teach all nations." Missionaries of Spain and Portugal followed the explorers to Africa, India, Asia and the South Seas. They accompanied the conquistadors to the Americas, and often preceded them as messengers of peace to win the natives to Christ. The missionaries of France, in their zeal for the spread of the Christian religion, sacrificed themselves also in their evangelical labors in North America. And they brought with them a civilization that was steeped in traditions both strongly Catholic and eminently cultural.

2. French missionary work began in North America with the arrival of the two Benedictines, Dom Guillaume Breton and Dom Antoine, chaplains in the Cartier expedition of 1535. They undertook some missionary work around what is now Quebec, but they had little success with the natives and their activity was short-lived. That was the only effort to evangelize the Indians made by the French in the 16th

century. In the beginning of the 17th century French priests again appeared on this continent. Between 1603 and 1605 Father Nicholas Aubrey, a secular priest, and a companion, who had joined Sieur de Monts on his voyage across the Atlantic, ministered to the colonists in Acadia. Father Aubrey was the first priest to celebrate Mass in New England, on St. Croix Island, where an attempt was made to establish a French settlement. Then, in 1610, another secular priest, Father Jessé La Flèche, a member of Poutrincourt's party, sought to convert the natives and succeeded in baptizing twenty-one of the Abenakis. The following year, two Jesuits, Pierre Biard and Ennemond Massé, came to Port Royal. They encountered much difficulty in trying to learn the language of the natives and also in trying to find favor with Poutrincourt. The next year, Gilbert du Thet, a lay brother, joined these two, but was sent back to France to make a report of the situation.

3. Du Thet returned in 1613 with Father Jacques Quentin, together with a band of colonists under the leadership of La Saussaye. This group was organized particularly to found a settlement and to christianize the natives. At Port Royal they were joined by Fathers Biard and Massé. Proceeding to Mount Desert Island, in Maine, they established themselves and called the place Saint Sauveur. Shortly after they had settled there, the place was raided by the English and all the colonists were taken prisoners. In the struggle against Argall and his followers, du Thet was killed. Both Saint Sauveur and Port Royal were destroyed by the English.

4. At this time Champlain was engaged in his explorations and discoveries. He had founded Quebec in 1608 and though most of his coloniests were Huguenots, sought for Catholic missionaries to convert the Indians. He had gained the favor of Louis XIII for this enterprise, and consequently, four Recollects of the Franciscan Order, Fathers Denis Jamay (Jamet), Jean d'Olbeau, Joseph Le Caron, and Brother Pacifique Duplessis, arrived in Quebec in 1615. The superior, Father Jamay, was to minister to the people in and

around Quebec, while Father d'Olbeau was sent to the Montagnais at Tadoussac and Father Le Caron to the Hurons at Carraghua, west of the Ottawa river. Le Caron also visited the tribes in the locality. These men learned the languages of the Hurons and the Algonquins and preached the Gospel to them.

5. This work was interrupted, however, because Champlain, disappointed that the settlement of Canada was not developing as he had hoped, returned to France to procure more colonists. He was accompanied by Fathers Jamay and Le Caron. Jamay remained in France to promote an interest in the missionary movement in North America, while Le Caron came back with Father Paul Huet. A number of other Recollects came during the ensuing years and they erected a church and a monastery in Quebec. Still, their work bore little fruit, for they were dependent on the French colonists, to whom also they had to minister; and besides, the Indians were fickle.

> For ten years did these gray friars practice the rites of the church in the Canadian woods, all the way from the fishing and trading outposts of Tadoussac to the western lake of the Nipissings. Barefooted, save for heavy wooden sandals, coarsely clad in gown and hood, enduring in a rigorous climate, to which they were unused, all manner of hardships by flood and field, they were earnestly devoted to their laborious calling in a time when elsewhere the air of New France was noisy with the strife of self-seeking traders and politicians. Yet somehow their mission seemed without important result. *(The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents,* ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites (73 vols. Cleveland, 1896-1907), I, 7.)

Nor were some of their companions any more successful in their work among the French colonists and the natives of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Gaspé, for they, too, underwent many disasters so that they were forced to abandon the work. Three of them joined their fellow religious in Quebec.

6. Yet the addition to their number in Quebec did not

lessen their burdens and difficulties; so they and the viceroy sent out an appeal to the Jesuits. In reply to this invitation, the Jesuits, Fathers Lalemant, Brebeuf, and Massé (who had been a prisoner of Argall), and the Recollect, Father Joseph Daillon, came to Quebec in 1625. Fathers Brebeuf and Daillon undertook the work of the ministry among the Hurons, accompanying them to the trading posts in the summer and to the hunt during the winter. In the meantime other Jesuits arrived, and so a house was set up in Quebec in 1626. The settlements of Quebec and Port Royal were little hamlets surrounded at this time by a palisade. Consequently, they fell easy prey to an English force in 1629. The territory was overrun and the priests and most of the colonists were deported. Less than 200 colonists remained. Thus ended the mission of the Recollects and the Jesuits in North America.

7. In 1632, however, the territory was restored to the French. But the Recollects did not return. Instead, the entire mission field was given to the Jesuits, with the exception of Acadia. It was taken over by the Capuchins. Missionary activity was begun anew by Fathers Paul Le Jeune and Anne de Nouë, Jesuits. Father Le Jeune began the regular series of the annual reports which have come down to us as the *Jesuit Relations*. He wanted to acquaint his superiors with the activity of the members of the Society in North America. He also wished to inspire other Jesuits with zeal for the missions and to interest the people of France in the North American missions. These reports contain "the great body of our information concerning the frontiers of New France in the 17th century." (Thwaites, *op. cit.* I, 38.) By 1637 there were twenty-three Jesuit priests and six brothers in the region. From their center in Quebec these men went far afield to work among the natives: to the Abenaki in Maine, the Hurons in Upper Canada, Michigan, and Ohio, the Iroquois in New York, the Ottawa in Wisconsin and Michigan, and the Illinois in Illinois. In the meantime, the work of the ministry was continued by others who had come to settle in Montreal.

8. A group of Frenchmen interested in founding a colony in Canada with missionaries in its company for the benefit of the colonists and also for the purpose of converting the Indians established the Notre Dame Company of Montreal in 1639. They sent forth the first group of colonists under the leadership of M. de Maisonneuve. This group arrived in Montreal, also known as Villemarie, in May, 1642. The first Mass was celebrated there by the Jesuit, Father Vimont, who had joined the group at Quebec. His fellow religious took care of the spiritual needs of the settlers until, under the leadership of Abbé de Queylus, the Sulpicians came to Montreal in 1657.

9. Because of problems concerning jurisdiction, a movement was begun to procure the appointment of a bishop for Canada. After many difficulties, Francois de Montmorency de Laval was appointed Bishop of Petraea and Vicar-Apostolic of Canada. Bishop Laval arrived at Quebec in June, 1659. The Jesuits were placed in charge of the Indian missions, while the seculars, the Sulpicians included, were entrusted with the parishes in and around Quebec and Montreal, for most of the colonists settled in these towns and in the region between them. Though the bishop established a seminary in Quebec in 1663, for some time the aspirants studied at the Jesuit college, founded in 1635. In 1665 he succeeded in having the seminary affiliated with the Seminary of the Foreign Missions at Paris. The priests who came to staff the seminary also undertook to serve the missions in Acadia, in Illinois, and on the lower Mississippi.

10. As early as 1633 the Jesuit, Father Buteux, had established himself at Three Rivers, where the Indians assembled to carry on the fur trade. At this post, the object of frequent raids by the hostile Iroquois, he remained until 1652, when they finally succeeded in putting him to death. During the years of his labors he had met with no little success, as he ministered to the natives at the post during the trading season and then accompanied one of the bands of natives when it departed for the wilderness. On such journeys,

usually hunts, he shared with the Indians their hardships and sufferings.

11. It became clear to the missionaries that their work would be at its best only when they had convinced the natives that they should settle in one particular spot rather than wander about. It was with this plan in mind that the Jesuits set up, for the Montagnais, the mission of St. Joseph (later Sillery), four miles above Quebec. This mission would also serve as a protection for them against the war-like Iroquois. Begun with a small group, this settlement grew apace and to it came the Algonquins as well as the Montagnais. Though they taught the natives to cultivate the soil, the missionaries were not entirely successful in keeping them at home, for they persisted in going hunting and fishing, at least occassionally. There were other difficulties too. Fire destroyed the church and the mission-house; the Iroquois made frequent raids on the settlement. Because of these raids the Algonquins practically disappeared, and even though the Abenakis took their place, the mission was abandoned in 1685 for a place not far from the St. Lawrence. This Mission of St. Francis de Sales became a center of trouble between the French and Indians on the one hand and the English in New England on the other. It was little heard of after the conquest of the land by the English and after the suppression of the Jesuits.

12. The Jesuits had occupied the missionary center in Montreal, which had been established by Maisonneauve. From there they went to minister to the Indians in the neighborhood. To their mission settlement came the Indians from the valleys of the lower St. Lawrence and the Ottawa. Later, this work was taken over by the Sulpicians. The mission was removed to Sault au Recollect, and afterwards to the Lake of the Two Mountains, where Iroquois, Algonquins, and Nipissings formed the village. Though the Jesuit and Recollect missions were suppressed when the English took over the land, the Sulpicians were allowed to continue the work at this mission.

13. The Jesuits had been given charge of the Indian missions after the restoration of Canada to France; but it was not until 1634 that they were able to reopen the mission among the Hurons. In September of that year Fathers Brebeuf, Antoine Daniel, and Davost were sent thither and they commenced their work in the town of Ihonatiria. Other priests came and other missions were opened and more distant places were visited. Fathers Charles Garnier and Isaac Jogues went among the Petuns; and in 1641 Fathers Jogues and Raymbault went as far as Sault Ste. Marie. Though these missionaries labored strenuously among the Hurons, they could claim only about a hundred converts among the 16,000 Indians, and most of these were infants or the aged, who had not long to live. The majority of the natives ignored them and tormented the converts, while the medicine men made every effort to destroy their work. Yet, by 1645 they had missions in five Huron towns and prospects seemed bright; but in 1648 the Iroquois attacked one of the villages and Father Daniel was killed while encouraging the defenders. Naturally, most of the natives fled into other parts of the territory. Since some of the villages had been spared, the Jesuits gathered at the mission of St. Ignatius only to have that attacked by the enemy. They fled to St. Louis, a neighboring mission, which in turn was besieged. Taken captive, Fathers Brebeuf and Lalemant were martyred after being brought back to St. Ignatius (1649). Fathers Garnier and Chabanel were killed in the Petun country. The surviving Jesuits followed their people to the islands on Lake Huron; but then they removed their converts to the Island of Orleans, near Quebec (1650). Later, the converts moved into Quebec, close to the fort; and when it was safe enough, they betook themselves to a spot about three or four miles away from that settlement; then they went to Old Lorette, nine miles from Quebec, where Father Chaumonot ministered to them; finally, before the end of the century, they settled at New Lorette or Indian Lorette.

With the fall of the Hurons, fell the best hope of the

Canadian mission. They, and the stable and populous communities around them, had been the rude material from which the Jesuit would have formed his Christian empire in the wilderness; but one by one these kindred peoples were uprooted and swept away, while the neighboring Algonquins, to whom they had been a bulwark, were involved with them in a common ruin. The land of promise was turned to a solitude and a desolation. There was still work in hand, it is true,—vast regions to explore and countless heathens to snatch from perdition; but these for the most part were remote and scattered hordes, from whose conversion it was vain to look for the same solid and decisive results. *(The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century,* Francis Parkman, Boston, 1867, 550.)

The great Huron mission, which had been conducted for thirty-five years, had employed twenty-nine missionaries, of whom seven had lost their lives in the work. This important field forsaken, many of the missionaries had returned to Europe disheartened, and apparently the future for Jesuit missions in New France looked gloomy enough. The Iroquois had now practically destroyed the Montagnais between Quebec and the Saguenay, the Algonkins of the Ottawa, and the Hurons, Petuns, and Neutrals. The French colonies of Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal had suffered from repeated raids of the New York confederates, and their forest trade was now almost wholly destroyed. (Thwaites, *op. cit.* 27.)

14. The Recollects had begun a mission on St. John River, in Acadia in 1619, but they abandoned it in 1624, joining their companions in Quebec. Other Recollects were in Acadia from 1630 to 1633. The Capuchins also ministered to the French in the territory. In 1634 the Jesuits founded a mission on Cape Breton. Fathers Julian Perrault, Charles Turgis, Andrew Richard, Martin de Lyonne, and James Fremin were among those who labored there under disheartening conditions until about 1670. A few years later the Recollects took over the work, assisted by priests from the Quebec Seminary and by the Jesuits.

15. The Jesuit, Jean Du Quen, had established a mission at Tadoussac in 1640 and was ably assisted by Fathers Buteux

and Druillettes. At first the missionaries spent the winters among the colonists in Quebec, going to Tadoussac for the summer when the trading parties arrived. Later, they accompanied the natives on the hunt. Others on this mission were Fathers Bailloquet, Nouvel, Beaulieu, Albanel, de Crepieul, Dalmas, Boucher, Laure, and Labrosse. In 1670 the mission was almost deserted because of disease and Iroquois attacks. This hostile tribe had forced the Indians of the district to scatter and flee; nonetheless, the missionaries followed their flock. And so, Crepieul established a mission on Hudson Bay, where his assistant, Father Dalmas, was killed in 1694. Broken down in health, Crepieul retired to Quebec in 1702; but Laure was at this mission until 1737. Father Labrosse remained at Tadoussac until his death in 1782.

2.
Missions in Maine

16. The French attempts to settle at St. Croix Island and Mount Desert Island brought the colonists and the priests in contact with the natives, a branch of the Algonquin family of Indians, called Abenakis (or Abnakis). This contact also resulted in the appearance of missionaries in Maine. From 1632 to 1654 the Capuchins of Acadia sent some of their members to minister to the Indians on the Penobscot. These religious were stationed at the French post of Pentagoet, and near it they erected a chapel, dedicating it to Our Lady. Among those who labored at this mission were Fathers Leo of Paris and Cosmas of Montes; but their work was discontinued when the English took over Acadia.

17. The Jesuit, Father Gabriel Druillettes, had founded the Mission of the Assumption on the Kennebec and had commenced the study of the native language. While there he instructed some of the sick and baptized the dying. After his return to Quebec in 1652 the mission was closed.

18. Toward the end of the 17th century the missions of Maine were reopened. The priests who began this work anew set up missions along the three rivers, Kennebec, Penobscot, and St. John. Jesuits, Recollects, and secular priests participated in this missionary activity, which was carried on for about half a century. Among the Jesuits were Fathers Rale (or Rasle), Vincent and Joseph Bigot, Joseph Aubery, Joseph Pierre de la Chasse, Etienne Lauverjat, and John Baptist Loyard. But the outstanding missionary among them was Father Sebastian Rale.

19. Beginning his apostolic career in the new world in 1689, Father Rale first devoted himself to the study of the

Indian languages among the natives near Quebec. Then after a few years of priestly work in the Illinois country he was sent to the Indians of Maine. He commenced his labors among those who lived on the Kennebec, ministering to those who had already been converted. When other Indians came to visit this village of Narantousac he undertook to instruct them and succeeded in gaining some converts. He beautified the chapel and trained a choir; he composed a dictionary of the Abenaki language. In order to secure help for his mission he made a voyage to France. For thirty years he labored in this territory, remaining even when the English objected to his presence. He was killed during an English attack on the natives in 1724. But his work was continued by others until 1754 when the mission seems to have been abandoned. A decade later the Indians moved away.

20. Chief among the secular priests in this region was Father Pierre Thury. Sent to the Abenakis by Bishop Laval, Father Thury made his residence at Pentagoet on the Penobscot. In 1688, a year after his arrival, he established the Mission of St. Anne, near Oldtown. Besides teaching, preaching and administering the sacraments, he composed prayers and hymns in the language of the natives. Later, he was sent to the natives in Acadia; he died at Halifax on June 3, 1699. Others carried on the work in Maine until 1764. After that there were occasional visits by missionaries from Acadia and by chaplains of the French navy.

3.
Missions in New York

21. Though the early missionaries had planned and hoped to evangelize the Iroquois, little contact was made with this hostile tribe until the Jesuits entered the territory as prisoners. This happened in 1642 when the Mohawks captured and tortured Father Isaac Jogues and the donné, René Goupil. The latter was killed, while the former, aided by the Dutch, escaped after more than a year of captivity, and returned to France. Soon, however, he was back to America, serving the government in the capacity of an envoy of the French to promote peace negotiations with the Mohawks. Shortly after this he went back to the Mohawks in the company of the donné, Jean Lalande, to begin missionary activities among them, only to be seized, tortured, and put to death on October 18, 1646. Another Jesuit, Father Joseph Poncet, was captured and tortured in 1653 by the same Indians, but was released when they sought for peace with the French. In 1654 Father Simon Le Moyne was sent by the French to show the Indians that the French were well disposed toward them. In the next three years he made three more visits to win them over; but his mission was not a success.

22. In the meantime, the Onondagas, one of the five Iroquois nations, having sent for missionaries, received Fathers Pierre Chaumonot and Claude Dablon. Soon the Indians wanted more missionaries and a colony of French settlers. So the Jesuit superior, Father Francois Le Mercier, and Father René Ménard joined a group of French colonists, led by a militia captain. With them was Claude Dablon (who had carried the Indians' petition to Quebec) and

Brothers Ambrose Broar and Joseph Boursier. This company left Quebec on May 17, 1656. The mission that was established proved successful and Onondaga became the center of missionary activity among all these Indians. There, in 1657, the priests were joined by new recruits, Fathers Paul Ragueneau and Francois Du Peron. A number of converts were gained and all the five tribes were visited. Shortly after this, however, the Indians became suspicious of the whites and planned war. So the missionaries left Onondaga and Father Le Moyne left the Mohawks, thus ending the first efforts to establish missions in New York, although Le Moyne did spend the year 1661 - 1662 among the Indians of Onondaga.

23. In 1666 the French sent an expedition to impress the Indians with a display of force. When peace was restored the French began to penetrate into the interior. Father Mercier, the Jesuit superior at Quebec, began plans to reopen the New York missions and soon sent Fathers Jacques Fremin, Jacques Bruyas, and Jean Pierron to commence the work anew. Father Fremin set up the Mission of Sainte Marie of the Mohawks, while Father Bruyas went to Oneida. After carrying out a commission to the Dutch at Fort Orange, Father Pierron was stationed at the Mohawk village, Tinniontoguen. In 1668 Father Julian Garnier came to work among the Iroquois; then followed Fathers Stephen de Carheil and Pierre Milet. By the end of 1668 there were missions among the Five Nations. Of the few notable converts made one was Catherine Tekakwitha. But the missionaries were never entirely successful because superstition and vice among the natives were too deeply rooted. Toward the end of the century the work was practically abandoned, though Jesuit missionaries, among them Fathers James de Lamberville, James d'Hue, and Peter de Mareuil, made attempts to revive the missions. The missions to the Iroquois ended with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

24. The Sulpician, Father Francis Piquet (or Picquet), established a reduction in or near present-day Ogdensburg

in 1748. Just as the buildings had been completed the place was attacked by hostile Indians. Father Piquet began anew and soon had a number of Indian families gathered at the settlement. In the course of time about 400 families became dependent on this mission. Bishop de Pontbriand visited the mission in the summer of 1752 and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. In 1753 Father Piquet went to France to secure aid for his people. On his return he spent some time on the battlefields during the French and Indian War and after the English had won he left for France. The mission, La Présentation, was closed by the English, and thus ended French influence among the Iroquois in New York.

4.

Northwestern Missions

25. The western missions of the French stretched from the Great Lakes down to the Gulf and were generally east of the Mississippi river. They were referred to as the Ottawa missions, the Illinois missions, and the Louisiana missions. Those about the Great Lakes included present-day Wisconsin and Michigan and parts of Illinois and Ohio. Through trade with the Hurons, the French had come in contact with the Ottawas, and so, though other tribes also inhabited the region of the northwest, the section became known as the Ottawa territory. The Ottawas met the Jesuits, Isaac Jogues and Charles Raymbaut, while on a visit to the Hurons in 1641 and at the invitation of the Ottawas the two priests visited their region. Again in 1656 Fathers Leonard Garreau and Gabriel Druillettes, Jesuits, joined an expedition to the western territory, but the Iroquois attacked the party and Father Garreau was seriously wounded. The party turned back to Quebec. In 1660 a fresh attempt to begin missionary work in the northwest was made. Another Jesuit, Father René Ménard, and the donné, Jean Guerin, accompanied the Ottawa flotilla which reached the southern shore of Lake Superior. A mission was set up at Keweenew Bay. After a winter spent here Father Ménard undertook a journey to some Huron Christians farther inland, but was never seen again.

26. In 1663 Bishop Laval appointed Claude Allouez, a Jesuit, vicar-general of all the natives and traders of the northwest. This missionary had come to America in 1658. He had spent three years laboring among the Indian tribes along the St. Lawrence. Then he had been appointed superior at Three Rivers. With the new appointment to the

northwest came the duty of visiting the tribes, securing missionaries for the work, promoting relations between the natives and the traders, and setting up missions. Father Allouez did not reach his new field of work until 1665. After two years of traveling through the territory he returned to Quebec with his report. He brought back Father Louis Nicholas to assist him in his vicariate. The two preached to many tribes, but only a few individuals were received into the Church.

27. In the following years other Jesuits came to his assistance, Jacques Marquette, Claude Dablon, Gabriel Druillettes, and Louis André. The work was now better organized and central points were chosen as mission sites. Such points were the mission of Ste. Marie at the Sault and those of La Pointe de St. Esprit on Chequamegon Bay and St. Francois Xavier at Green Bay. From these centers the priests made visits to the Indians in the various parts of the northwest.

28. At St. Esprit, Marquette spent more than a year ministering to the natives. Jacques Marquette had come to the new world in 1666 and had spent a year at Three Rivers studying the difficult Indian languages. Appointed to the Ottawa mission in 1668, he spent the first winter at the Sault among friendly Indians; then he had gone to St. Esprit. When the Sioux drove out the people in his care, Marquette accompanied them and founded the mission of St. Ignace on the north shore of the Straits of Mackinac, in 1671. It was to St. Ignace that Louis Jolliet came in 1672 with the news that he and Marquette were to search for the great river. They spent the winter together, studying and planning. In the spring they undertook the historic expedition.

29. In the meantime, continuing his missionary activity, Allouez had founded a mission at Rapides des Pères on the Fox river. In a few years there were over 2,000 Christian Indians at this mission. Though he spent a number of years among the natives of the northwest territory, he finished his missionary career among the Illinois Indians, to whom he had been sent after the death of Marquette. Allouez died

in 1689, venerated as the "Apostle of the Northwest." It is said that he baptized fully 10,000 Indians and that he preached to 100,000 of them. Father Dablon called him a second Francis Xavier.

30. Other Jesuits who labored in this region were Fathers Henry Nouvel, Pierre Bailloquet, Charles Albanel, André Bonneault, Jean Enjalran, Nicholas Potier, Stephen de Carheil, Jacques Gravier, and Jacques Marest. The Recollects also made some contact with the natives in this region. Among these were Fathers Gabriel Ribourde, Zenobius Membré, and Louis Hennepin, who were in La Salle's party in this region in 1679. Father Hennepin was the chronicler of La Salle's expedition.

31. The Miamis who had settled in the region by the shores of Lake Michigan had the famous Father Allouez in their midst for a time. But it was another Jesuit, Father Claude Aveneau, who dedicated much of his missionary life to laboring among them. He had been forced to leave them for a time, but returned and strove to revivify the faith that had been instilled into their hearts. It is said that he spent a couple of decades ministering to this tribe. Finally, because of ill-health, he found it necessary to return to Quebec.

32. When the establishment of Detroit was being considered by La Mothe Cadillac, plans were made to have the Ottawas, Hurons, and Miamis gather round the settlement. Cadillac felt that this would prevent the English from securing the Indian trade. This, of course, would lead to the complete abandonment of the missions of the Sault, Mackinac, and St. Joseph, and to the weakening of the mission at Green Bay. Naturally, the Jesuits were opposed to such an enterprise. They saw that their work was more successful when the Indians were to themselves. Because of their unwillingness to accept Cadillac's arrangement a number of the Jesuits left the northwest.

33. The Recollect, Father Nicholas Delhalle, had been appointed chaplain of the fort and pastor of the settlers. Though the chapel was destroyed when the town burned

in 1703, soon a new chapel was erected. But in a few years the place was attacked by the Ottawas and Father Delhalle was killed. Other Recollects succeded him and secular priests also were sent to Detroit.

34. The Jesuits did minister to the Hurons in the villages near Detroit from 1728 to 1781; among them were Fathers Armand de la Richarderie, Pierre Potier, and Jean-Baptiste de Salleneuve. Father Potier remained there even after the suppression of the Society until his death in 1781. Some of the others, Fathers Jean de la Morinie, Godfrey Coquart, and Jean-Baptiste du Sainte-Pé, succeeded Father Marest at St. Ignace. Fathers Du Jaunay and Le Franc were in this territory when recalled to Quebec in 1763. Two of the Jesuits, Fathers Philippe Pierson and Jacques Marest, attempted to convert the Sioux.

5.

The Illinois Missions

35. These missions extended to the region that lay between the Wabash, the Ohio, and the Mississippi rivers, comprising what is today Illinois and part of Indiana. The first contact the Illinois Indians had with Christianity occurred when some of them visited the Jesuit missions to the north, at the time of Allouez and Marquette. On his descent down the Mississippi, Marquette visited them, and he stopped with them again on his return. Shortly before his death he set up the Mission of the Immaculate Conception at Kaskaskia; and to this mission went Allouez in 1677.

36. The Recollects in La Salle's party also stopped here. Moving a little below the village, the group landed and Mass was celebrated. This was New Year's Day, 1680. Then the party moved farther to a spot near present-day Peoria, where La Salle erected a fort. Meanwhile, Father Membré began to instruct the natives in the neighborhood, while his companion, Father Ribourde, served as chaplain to the French. Part of the group had set out northward when the Iroquois fell upon the settlement and forced the rest to retreat upstream. Father Ribourde was killed enroute, but Father Membré succeeded in reaching the Jesuit mission of St. Francois. Later, the fort was restored and was under the spiritual care of Father Allouez.

37. In the following years Jesuits and Quebec Seminary priests came to the Illinois region. Among the former was Father Jacques Gravier, who set up a chapel for the natives near the fort. For two years another Jesuit, Father Rale, carried on missionary activity at this place. Appointed head of all the western missions, Father Gravier took up his resi-

dence at St. Ignace; he was replaced at the Illinois mission by Fathers Julien Bineteau and Francois Pinet. Both of these worked for a time in Chicago, being connected with the Guardian Angel Mission.

38. In 1698 the Bishop of Quebec, Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Vallier, sent Francois Jolliet de Montigny to this territory as his vicar-general. With him went two other priests from the Quebec Seminary, Fathers Antoine Davion and Jean Francois de Saint Cosme. The latter set up a station among the Tamarois at a place later called Cahokia, while the former went to the Tonicas on the Yazoo river. Father Montigny selected his mission near Natchez among the Taensas. A few years later, another priest from the Seminary, Father Jean Bergier, arrived and took up work at Cahokia. This mission was under the care of the Seminary priests until 1763.

39. The Jesuits did not abandon their labors among the Illinois Indians. They had three chapels in the region. On a trip to Louisiana in 1699 or 1700, Father Gravier stopped at Peoria and learned that the Kaskaskias were about to separate from the Peorias. He and Father Gabriel Marest joined the Kaskaskias and Father Marest set up a permanent mission at the mouth of the Kaskaskia river.

40. Troubles arose between the Jesuits and the Seminary priests at Cahokia, concerning work among the Indians. The Jesuits had been commissioned to evangelize these natives, and now it appeared that the newcomers were to have this duty. The members of the Society, naturally, felt that they had been slighted. When the question was presented to the Court of France the king had a commission of three members of the French hierarchy appointed to hear the case. They gave their decision in favor of the Seminary priests. This news was brought to the territory the following year, 1702. Through the ensuing years a number of the Seminary priests came to Cahokia: Fathers Dominic Mary Varlet (from Paris), Calvarien, Thaumur de la Source, Courrier, Gaston, Gagnon, Laurent, Mercier, and Duverger.

41. Father Jean-Baptiste Mercier was most zealous in his priestly work. He became well acquainted with the Illinois language and seems to have acted as interpreter between the Indians and the French in a dispute. He made visits to the Missouri and Osage villages. He edified the Indians by his virtuous life; they consulted him in all matters. Father Mercier died at Cahokia on March 30, 1753, having spent about thirty years among the Indians in this region.

42. Father Francois Forget Duverger had been in the Illinois country about ten years when the decree ordering the suppression of the Jesuits was issued. It was at this time, too, that the English had concluded the successful war against the French. Fearing that the property might be seized by the English government, he undertook to sell the holdings of the Seminary priests for a fraction of their value. This he did in spite of the opposition of the inhabitants of Cahokia. Then he left for France, in 1764.

43. Kaskaskia had remained the center of Jesuit activity in Illinois and there Fathers Gabriel Marest and Jean Mermet were most successful in ministering to the natives. There both of them completed their missionary careers. Father Marest was so highly esteemed by the Indians that they would not allow him to leave them to go to the Peorias. So Father Jean Marie de Ville was sent. Being a zealous and talented priest, he was successful in renewing the Faith among the Peorias. He succeeded Father Mermet as superior of the missions in Illinois, but died in Natchez in 1720, where he had gone to settle some matters connected with the Illinois missions. Others replaced these missionaries. Father Jean le Boullenger labored at Kaskaskia and wrote a grammar and dictionary of the Illinois language. In 1723 Father Francois de Kereben was superior of the mission.

44. In 1722 the Illinois missions of the Jesuits had been restricted to the territory north of the Ohio river. The superior was to reside in Illinois and was to serve as vicar-general of the Bishop of Quebec. Because of difficulties in affairs in Louisiana (matters of jurisdiction and ecclesiastical

support) a new arrangement was made and the mission field was extended to Natchez. More complications arose, and so Father Nicholas de Beaubois, the superior of the Illinois missions, set out for France, feeling that he could best settle this problem by direct contact with the authorities. While there he received permission for the superior of the Jesuit missions in Illinois and Louisiana to reside in New Orleans. After this it was customary for the Jesuits who were destined for the Illinois missions to come by way of New Orleans.

45. Among those who came in the company of Father de Beaubois were Fathers de Guyenne, Dumas, Du Poisson, Le Petit, and Souel. And soon after came Fathers Tartarin and Doutreleau. Father de Beaubois remained in New Orleans, while Fathers Tartarin and Dumas were sent to the missions among the Illinois. Of the others, Father de Guyenne went to the Alibamons, Father Le Petit to the Choctaws, Father Du Poisson to the Arkansas, Father Louel to the Yazoos, and Father Doutreleau to open a mission on the Wabash.

46. Fort Vincennes on the Wabash was established some time in the late 1720's or early 1730's. Father de Guyenne visited the post. Father Sebastian Meurin became its resident pastor in the 1740's, and was succeeded by Fathers Du Jaunay, Vivier, and Devernai. Father Devernai was the last Jesuit pastor, for in 1763 the Society was suppressed and he and his companions in the Illinois missions were deported. Only Father Meurin was permitted by the authorities to return to Illinois.

6.
Louisiana's Missions

47. The territory of the Mississippi valley was formally taken possession of in the name of the King of France by the explorer, Robert Cavelier de La Salle, on April 9, 1682. A plan to colonize the territory had been formulated by the explorer and presented to Louis XIV, from whom it received full approval. Priests were also appointed for the missions. But this plan ended in failure. La Salle was not destined to colonize this territory. Of the priests in the party three, Fathers Le Clercq and Membré, Recollects, and Chefdeville, a Sulpician, were in the group massacred on the shores of Texas.

48. Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, a Canadian by birth, was selected to lead a new colonizing expedition to Louisiana. He sailed from Brest on October 24, 1698, and reached Mobile Bay in February. In the party was the Recollect, Father Anastasius Douay, appointed to remain at the settlement. He worked zealously, ministering to those on the ships and at the fort. Once work had begun on the fort ta Biloxi, Iberville became anxious to set out for France to make a report concerning the colony. The Recollect seemed anxious to accompany the explorer.

49. Meanwhile, the priests from the Quebec Seminary were ministering to the people along the Mississippi, both the colonists and the natives. Among them was Father Bordenave, who became chaplain at the fort. The commander of the fort, Sauvolle, stated that this missionary was an exemplary priest, celebrating Mass for the French settlers each day and gathering them together each morning and evening for prayers.

50. On his return to Louisiana, Iberville brought the

Jesuit, Father Paul Du Ru, who had been ordained in 1698. He was sent to take Father Douay's place. He accompanied Iberville up the mouth of the Mississippi and wrote a journal of this journey. He was a man of energy and was gifted intellectually, facile in the study of languages. In a short time he was able to instruct the Indians about the Faith. He acted as chaplain at the fort and as missionary to the Indians in the surrounding territory. His journal tells the story of a life spent in spreading the Gospel and in ministering to the people. He was joined by another Jesuit, Father Peter Dongé, who became chaplain at the fort when Du Ru returned to France in 1702. By this time the fort was removed from Biloxi to Mobile. Father Limoges, a Jesuit, had come down from the Houma mission to Mobile. Discouraged, because of difficulties, he left for France. And so, too, did Father Dongé leave for France, in 1704, when he was recalled by his superior after the mission at Mobile had been placed under the control of the Seminary priests.

51. Bishop Saint-Vallier had erected the settlement at Mobile into a canonical parish and had given it to the Seminary priests. Father Henry de la Vente became the first pastor, while Father Alexander Huvé became his assistant. They worked together for six years and then Father la Vente returned to France. At about this time it was decided to move the fort to Mobile Bay, the site of present-day Mobile, where Father Huvé continued his parochial work. To this Louisiana mission came Father Matthew of St. Anne, a Carmelite, whose name appears in the registers at New Orleans and Mobile.

52. Because of dissatisfaction with the locations of Biloxi and Mobile the leaders of the colonizing enterprise thought of a new settlement. This plan was carried out after Bienville became governor in 1718. The new site was named New Orleans. Though a church was planned, for a number of years the settlers worshiped in a warehouse. Father F. Prothais Boyer, Recollect, was the first regular missionary. The parish register also lists Fathers Matthew,

Charles, Charles Joseph, and Maximin, discalced Carmelites, and Fathers le Breton, Richard, le Monier, Darquevana, and Morez.

53. On May 16, 1722, Louisiana was divided into three ecclesiastical jurisdictions. The churches and missions in the district west of the Mississippi to the Ohio were to be in the hands of the Capuchins, whose superior was to reside in New Orleans. The second district extended over the territory north of the Ohio and was given to the Jesuits; their superior was to reside in Illinois. The third district comprised the region east of the Mississippi. The Carmelites received this assignment, with Mobile as the superior's place of residence. Each of the superiors would be the vicar-general of the Bishop of Quebec in the Order's assigned territory. But the Carmelites were not in favor with the French government at the time, and so their appointment was revoked and their district was turned over to the Capuchins. Father Maximin, however, was allowed to remain.

54. Though Father Bruno was the first superior of the Capuchins, his position was soon taken over by Father Raphael. These first days were difficult indeed for the Capuchins. They could hardly find a suitable shelter and they had little for livelihood. Naturally, the superior complained and new arrangements were made by the Administration. But other difficulties came up.

55. As was mentioned before, the mission field of the Jesuits was extended and the superior was to reside at New Orleans. Though Father de Beaubois was replaced by Father Le Petit, the former came back as superior only to be recalled a second time. Meanwhile, there was only one vicar-general for Louisiana, the Capuchin superior. From him both the Capuchins and the Jesuits had to receive ecclesiastical powers. Father Matthias had succeeded Father Raphael and then was succeeded by Father Philip, who became vicar-general for the Capuchins only, while the Jesuit superior, Father Le Petit, became vicar-general for the Jesuits. Then came Father Doutreleau for the

Jesuits and Father Peter for the Capuchins. But in 1741 the Jesuit superior was appointed vicar-general over all in the territory. This was the arrangement until the suppression of the Jesuits in the Louisiana territory in 1763.

56. In spite of all these difficulties, missionary activity continued. The New Orleans parish grew so that by 1750 it numbered 600 families. Three or four priests took care of the spiritual needs of these souls. Father Philibert sought to minister to the people at Natchez, while Father Caspar labored at Balize, the post at the mouth of the Mississippi. Both underwent many hardships. The Mobile register shows that a number of Capuchins labored there during the following years: Fathers Claude, Jean Francois, Prosper, Agnan, Felix, Amand, Seraphim, Peter, Hilary, Barnabas, and Sebastian. Father Ferdinand came there in 1756 and remained even after the section was ceded to England. Though he retired in 1771, he returned shortly after and remained with the people until his death a few years later. That these priests were energetic in the ministry is evident from the fact that they traveled forty and sixty miles from Mobile to minister to the people. Nor were the Indians neglected. The Capuchins also ministered to the people at Les Allemands, a German colony a few miles distant from New Orleans; and at Pointe Coupée Father Anselm built a chapel in 1738. By 1750 the Pointe Coupée settlement had one hundred families. Father Irenaeus was pastor there in 1765. These friars also labored among the Apalaches, the Tonicas, the Natchitoches, and the Chapitoulas.

57. During this period the Jesuits continued to evangelize the Indians. Among those who shared in this work were Fathers Souel, Dumas, Du Poisson, Morand, Le Roy, Le Prédour, Baudouin, Carette, and Lefevre. They experienced great difficulty because of the problems connected with the standard of morals and the traffic in brandy. Besides, France was growing hostile toward the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits also ministered to the settlers, at times, and took care of the spiritual needs of the Ursulines, who had come to New Orleans in 1727 to begin a school, a hos-

pital and an orphanage. Only a few Jesuits remained in the territory at the coming of the order of suppression.

1763-1791

58. After the English conquest of New France there was a slackening in the missionary activity of the French, not because of the lack of interest but because of the difficulty in obtaining priests needed for the work. The English were opposed to having men recruited from the clergy of France; and many of those who had been active on the missions had been forced to return to their native land. This was especially true of the Jesuits, who had been suppressed in France just at this time. Nonetheless, the missions were not entirely abandoned, for some of the French missionaries had remained after the English and Spanish had taken control of the territory. Besides, the seminary in Canada had nurtured and brought to fruition a number of Canadian vocations; some of these priests were sent to the missions that had been conducted by the French missionaries.

59. Though the settlers in Canada had difficulties with their new masters, still, they were permitted to continue their religious practices and through the ensuing years the problems that were encountered were gradually ironed out, for the English government learned to appreciate the loyalty of these people of Canada especially during the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Yet priests from France were not allowed to enter Canada, although some exiled priests were welcomed at the time of the French Revolution.

60. After 1763 only three Jesuits remained in that part of the French colonial possessions which form a part of our present-day United States: Father Baudouin in Louisiana, Father Meurin in Illinois, and Father Potier near Detroit. Some French Capuchins continued to labor in Louisiana under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Santiago de Cuba. In Illinois there were Seminary priests, Father Gagnon, the

Recollects, Fathers Luc and Hippolyte Collet, and the Capuchin, Father Hilaire. Another Recollect, Father Bocquet, was in Detroit.

61. Important because of his work on the missions in Illinois was Father Pierre Gibault, who was sent to this territory by the Bishop of Quebec shortly after his ordination in 1768. He was the vicar-general for the bishop and was for a long time the only priest in the region. He is credited with having aided Colonel George Rogers Clark in winning over the old French posts. He is usually referred to as the "Patriot Priest of the West" and he received the thanks of the Virginia Legislature for his services to the American cause. For more than twenty years he ministered to the Catholics in the region, remaining there after the Americans took over; but he left the Illinois country after an unsuccessful appeal for the grant of some land whereby he might support himself.

62. Other French or Canadian priests were active in the territory involved in the American Revolution. The French army and navy had chaplains; ninety names are given in the lists. The Canadian volunteers had Father Lotbinière, who signed himself "chaplain of the United States." The Franciscan, Father Seraphim Bandol, was chaplain to the French ministers. All these helped to break down some of the prejudice toward the Catholic Church.

63. With the end of the war came the problem of jurisdiction in the new nation. On June 9, 1784, Father John Carroll was appointed prefect-apostolic of the Church in the United States. At the time of his appointment there was a dearth of priests, and so the new superior of the territory had little choice in the selection of men for the much needed work. Abbé La Poterie, who founded the Church in Boston, caused Carroll no little trouble; his successor, Father Louis Rousselet, was also a problem. But he was consoled to have the Capuchin, Father R. P. De Rosey, minister to the people in Maryland. Father William De Rohan labored in Kentucky.

64. In the meantime, arrangements were being made for the erection of a diocese in the new country and the priests of the new nation were given the privilege of selecting a worthy candidate. It seemed only natural that the choice should fall on Father John Carroll. The Holy See approved this choice and issued the Bull for the erection of the Diocese of Baltimore, on November 6, 1789. While in London for his consecration, Carroll met the Sulpician, Francois Nagot, who had been sent by his superior general, Jacques Emery, to discuss plans with the new bishop for the establishment of a seminary in the new diocese. Not only were these priests to staff the institution but they would also bring the first students. Nor would they simply teach. They would care for souls, looking out for the spiritual needs of the Catholics living near the seminary. The superior would also send men for the express purpose of serving in the ministry. Thus would the lack of clergy become less troublesome to Bishop Carroll.

65. These were not the only French priests who sought for a haven from the Revolution. Some would accompany groups of French settlers from the homeland and also from the French possessions in America. Others would come through the influence of Carroll's English friend, Father Thomas Talbot. In addition, the newly arrived priests would send for fellow priests to come to help in the work of evangelization in the new republic. In all, about one hundred French priests came to the United States during the episcopate of John Carroll.

7.

Ministry in the East

66. Prior to his consecration, Bishop Carroll had difficulty in finding priests suitable for the faithful in Boston; but shortly after his return from London he was fortunate to secure the services of Father Francis Matignon, a member of a wealthy and cultured Parisian family. Father Matignon had been forced to seek refuge in London, and there he had become acquainted with Father Talbot, who had sent him to Carroll. Matignon was sent to Boston and for twenty-six years he traveled through New England, ministering to the needs of the faithful. The Sulpician, Father Francis Ciquard, centered his work among the Indians in Maine, where he remained for a few years. Discouraged, because he had difficulty in learning the Indian language, Ciquard retired to Canada, leaving Matignon alone in New England.

67. It was then that Matignon thought of a priest friend in England to whom he sent a letter, describing the needs of Carroll and urging him to come to America. Father John Cheverus, adept in the study of languages, responded to this plea and on his arrival was welcomed by Bishop Carroll, who sent him to the Indians in Maine. Cheverus learned their language and proved most helpful to his flock. During these years he lived with Matignon in Boston, making two visits annually to the Indians. In Boston he won the esteem and affection of persons of every creed; and in Boston he would assume his duties as its first bishop. Nor did he confine his work to the Indians. He accompanied Matignon on journeys to the Catholics scattered through Massachusetts and the neighboring states. In 1799 Cheverus was replaced at the Indian mission in Maine by a friend, Father John

Romagné, whom he had encouraged to leave England and come to the United States.

68. Bishop Carroll had great hopes for the spread of Catholicism in New England with three such apostolic men preaching and ministering to the people. Another friend of theirs was Father Ambrose Sougé, who was chaplain to Vicomte de Sibert Cornillon, an émigré living near Hartford, Connecticut. Father Sougé also ministered to the people in the neighborhood, ably assisted by another refugee priest, Father J. S. Tisserant, who had been forced to flee from Santo Domingo. Father Tisserant also worked in Boston. Some religious were also in Boston, but little is known of their work or the length of their stay.

69. At times the priests of New England ministered to the Catholics in New York. Fathers Cheverus, Matignon, and Tisserant officiated at St. Peter's on Barclay Street. Father Sougé also served the Catholics in New York, while Father Tisserant spent a year among the Santo Domingo refugees living in Elizabeth, New Jersey. To this city and to Madison, New Jersey, went the French Carmelite, Peter Vianney, who was stationed at old St. Peter's, New York, where Fathers Louis Sibourd and James C. Halbout were for a time. And in New York worked Father John Le Marre and Father Pierre Joulin. For a time Dom Augustin de l'Estrange and his Trappist companions lived in the city and ministered to the faithful.

70. Not only did the priests of New York and New England show their devotion to the people of New Jersey. Those of Philadelphia visited the Catholics of Princeton, Burlington, and Trenton, ministering particularly to the French people of those cities. Among the priests were J. La Grange, B. de Borniol and J. Boury. But their center of work was in Philadelphia, at St. Joseph's and Holy Trinity parishes. To St. Joseph's went Father Louis Delavau to assist; and also Fathers Anthony Joseph Larroque (or L'Aroque), René Houdet (or Boudet), Francis Jourdenais, and A. J. R. M. de Kersauson de Kerjean. There, too, at intervals went the future Archbishop of Baltimore, Am-

brose Maréchal, a Sulpician. The Sulpicians, Fathers Peter Babad and James Joubert (who founded the Oblate Sisters of Providence, a colored community, in 1829), visited and served the people of Philadelphia; and also Fathers Louis Sibourd and Matthew Hérard. Later, Bishop Carroll appointed Hérard vice prefect apostolic of the Danish Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John. In Philadelphia at times were Father Vincent de Paul, the Trappist, and Father Xavier Michel, while Father Ladavière called at Holy Trinity parish enroute to New York in 1813. A Father I. Larzelière was at Mt. Holly, New Jersey, in 1795.

71. In Pennsylvania, too, were some priests with the French refugees who established the colony of Asylum, near Towanda, in Bradford County. These were Fathers Carles, Fromentin, Colin de Sévigny, and John Bec-de-Lièvre. After five years of missionary activity in this settlement, it seems that Father Carles departed for Georgia where he continued his priestly work. Fromentin afterwards studied law and was admitted to the bar in New Orleans. De Sévigny became a chaplain in the army of Toussant l'Ouverture in Santo Domingo. He fled to Charleston after the defeat of the insurrectionists; there he died in 1824. Bec-de-Lièvre remained at Asylum until 1808.

72. Father Peter Janin spent several months of 1794 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and was succeeded by Father Mongrand, who remained for about a year. Other priests stopped in Pittsburgh on their way to the mission territory beyond. Father Benedict Flaget was there for six months in 1792; and Fathers Badin and Barrières visited the settlement in 1793, on their way to Kentucky. Father Michael Fournier spent the winter of 1796-1797 there; and in 1798 Father Dilhet stopped off while on his way to Detroit. But Father Stephen Faure remained with the Santo Domingo refugees in Delaware until his death in 1798; he was succeeded by Father Cibot, who also ministered to the Catholics of Philadelphia and Baltimore. For a time Father Bauduy was also in Delaware.

73. In Maryland there were the Sulpicians, Nagot, Tes-

sier, Garnier, and Levadoux, and also Canon Delavau. These men taught at the seminary and served on the cathedral staff. Another Sulpician, John Baptist Chicoisneau was treasurer at the seminary and ministered to the people of St. Peter's parish, where Tessier and Cibot carried on their priestly work. Tessier also undertook to care for the Negroes who had come to Baltimore from Santo Domingo. He organized a parish for them, being assisted in this work by Louis William DuBourg, who conducted a catechism class for them at the seminary. Father DuBourg gained renown as president of Georgetown College and as founder of St. Mary's College in Baltimore. At St. Peter's also was Father John Francis Moranvillé, who later became pastor of St. Patrick's at Fells Point, built a new church there and made it a center of Catholic activity. For a time he was assisted by John Dilhet and Benedict Flaget. Father Angadreme Le Mercier officiated at St. Peter's in 1800, signing himself "rector of St. John's in Savannah, Georgia," where he had gone in 1796. In Baltimore, too, was Father John de Mondésir.

74. Father George de Périgny, Doctor of the Sorbonne, labored in the neighborhood of the estate of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, residing at Doughoregan Manor. He was appointed librarian of the first public library. Father John Dubois, friend of many of the leading men of the republic, was pastor of the parish in Frederick, Maryland, for ten years. He built the first Catholic church there. Then he went to Emmitsburg to serve the Catholics there and he continued this work even after he had established Mt. St. Mary's College. He was among those French priests who helped Mother Seton found the community of the Sisters of Charity. Later he became the Bishop of New York. In 1810 Father Duhamel relieved Dubois of his parochial duties, remaining as pastor until his death in 1818. Prior to this appointment, he had ministered to the people in Hagerstown, Maryland. John Baptist David (later Bishop in Kentucky) was placed in charge of the faithful in lower Maryland—those of Upper and Lower Zacchia, Matawoman,

Waldorf, and Bryantown—where he spent more than ten years of his priestly life. Previously he had been chaplain at Charles Carroll's manor. On the mission in southern Maryland was also Father Joseph Harent, but only for a brief period. Before taking charge of Bohemia Manor, Father Maréchal went to St. Mary's County. On the eastern shore of Maryland labored Fathers Sougé, Sebastian De Rosey, and Marcel Pasquet de Leyde. Father de Leyde also assisted at St. Peter's in Baltimore and at White Clay Creek in Delaware. On the Maryland missions were also Fathers John Baptist Carey, Germain Bitouzé, Peter Espinette, Charles Leander Lusson, and Simon Gabriel Bruté (later Bishop of Vincennes).

75. From Maryland some of the priests went to the Catholics in Virginia. Fathers Maréchal and Duhamel served the mission at Winchester, while Father Dubois labored for the faithful in Norfolk, assisted by Father T. C. Mongrand. Father Xavier Michel carried on his priestly work in Richmond. Father James Lucas was a pastor in Norfolk. Michel was visited and helped by Joseph Pierre Clorivière, who after his ordination in 1812 had been sent to Charleston, South Carolina, where Father Le Mercier, the organizer of Catholic activity in Georgia, had taken over in 1803. Le Mercier covered much territory in his missionary labors, for he visited the Catholics scattered through Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. In this southern mission for a time were Fathers Babad, Sougé, and Carles.

8.
Ministry in the West

76. Not all the émigré priests remained in the east. When the Catholics of the old French fort of Vincennes asked Bishop Carroll for a priest in 1792, he promised to send them Father Flaget after the latter had spent a few months at the seminary, learning the English language. Because of his zeal in instructing and ministering to the people of Vincennes, Flaget had revived in a few years the faith of a people who had grown lax and lukewarm. He showed his admirable courage during the smallpox epidemic, when he took care of the sick and buried the dead. Instead of receiving support from his parishioners, he gave them of his own slender resources. He also ministered to the Indians in that territory. When he was recalled by Carroll, he was succeeded by John Francis Rivet. This highly cultured priest spent eight years in the neighborhood of Vincennes, serving the colonists and the natives. Appointed vicar-general, he continued his work until his death in 1804. His successor was Father Donatien Olivier, who for the next ten years visited Vincennes from time to time and cared for the spiritual needs of the people. Father Stephen Badin also officiated there. There, too, came the Trappist, Father Urban Guillet, leader of a group of religious who were planning a foundation in this country. He and his companions labored among the people living near the monastery.

77. In Ohio a group of French emigrants had established themselves at Gallipolis and when the priest appointed to care for their spiritual needs learned that he was under the jurisdiction of Bishop Carroll he came to Baltimore to receive the necessary faculties. This Benedictine of the Congregation of St. Maur, Dom Peter Joseph Didier, not only

received the faculties but was also appointed vicar-general. Shortly after, discouraged because of the religious indifference of his people, he retired. The following year Fathers Badin and Barrières spent a few days ministering to the wants of the faithful. Father Badin made subsequent visits there, even though Father Barrières had been appointed vicar-general, for this vicar abandoned the mission in four months, going to Spanish Louisiana.

78. Father Stephen Badin's assigned mission was Kentucky, where Bishop Carroll had sent him after ordaining him on May 25, 1793. There were about 300 Catholic families in Kentucky at this time. For the first eighteen months Father Badin lived in Scott County, and visited settlers and natives in other sections, going to Tennessee, Ohio, and Indiana, to all the territory west of the Alleghany Mountains, not under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Quebec. For several years he was alone in Kentucky; but in 1797 Father Michael Fournier came, living for a few months with Father Badin, then taking up residence at Rolling Fork, remaining there until he died in 1803. A letter sent by Fournier to a fellow priest in London brought Anthony Salmon to Kentucky in 1799. But in ten months his work was finished for he was killed by a fall from his horse.

79. The Trappists also helped Father Badin. One of the most outstanding missionaries among them was Father Marie Joseph Dunand, who baptized and instructed, heard confessions, and won converts. The chapel of these religious was open to the faithful.

80. Shortly after their departure Father Badin welcomed Bishop Flaget to his new diocese of Bardstown. He was a true missionary bishop in a missionary diocese, for no labor was considered beneath his dignity as long as souls could be saved. Nor was his vicar-general, Father David, wanting in the same zeal, for besides supervising the work of the seminarians, he also ministered to the needs of the faithful in the territory. David founded a community of religious

in Kentucky in 1812, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. A new member was added to this group of Kentucky missionaries with the ordination of Guy I. Chabrat by Bishop Flaget on December 21, 1811.

81. Bishop Carroll had sent Father Gabriel Richard to Illinois shortly after his arrival in America. Establishing his residence at Prairie du Rocher, he labored for six years among the 800 Canadians in southern Illinois and the 300 Indians living at Cahokia. For two years he was ably assisted by Father Michael Levadoux; and for a time also by Father Pierre Janin. The two brothers, Fathers Donatien and John Olivier, arrived in 1799. John ministered to the faithful at Cahokia from 1799 to 1811, while Donatien labored among the Catholics at Kaskaskia and Prairie du Rocher.

82. On leaving the Illinois mission, Father Levadoux went to the Michigan territory in 1796 as Carroll's vicar-general, serving the people of Detroit and Mackinac Island. In reply to his plea for assistance, the bishop sent Fathers Richard and Dilhet. After Levadoux's recall Richard became the vicar-general and pastor of St. Anne's parish in Detroit. Bishop Plessis wrote of him:

> This ecclesiastic is, moreover, thoroughly estimable on account of his regularity, of the variety of his knowledge, and especially of an activity of which it is difficult to form an idea. He has the talent of doing, almost simultaneously, ten entirely different things. Provided with newspaper (*gazettes*), well informed on all political questions, ever ready to argue on religion when the occasion presents itself, and thoroughly learned in theology, he reaps his hay, gathers the fruit of his garden, manages a fishery fronting his lot, teaches mathematics to one young man, reading to another, devotes time to mental prayer, establishes a printing-press, confesses all his people, imports carding and spinning wheels and looms, to teach the women of his parish how to work, leaves not a single act of his parochial register unwritten, invents an electric machine, goes on sick calls at a very great distance, writes letters to and receives others from all parts, preaches on every Sunday and holy-day both lengthily and learnedly, walks for whole days, loves to

converse, receives company, teaches catechism to his young parishioners, supports a girls' school under the management of a few female teachers of his own choosing, whom he directs like a religious community whilst he gives lessons in plain-song to young boys assembled in a school he has founded, leads a most frugal life, and is in good health, as fresh and able, at the age of fifty, as one usually is at thirty. (Abbe Lindsay, "Extracts from the Journal of the Pastoral Visitation of Monseigneur Joseph Octave Plessis in 1816," *The American Catholic Historical Researches,* XXII (1905), 224-225.)

Richard's companion, John Dilhet, labored in this territory from 1799 to 1805, serving as pastor at Raisin River and ministering to the people in Detroit and at Mackinac Island.

83. Dom Peter Didier, missionary to the settlers at Gallipolis, spent about eight years among the Catholics of Missouri, especially those of Florissant, St. Louis, and St. Charles. The Recollect, Charles Lusson, was pastor at St. Charles from 1799 to 1804. Father Pierre Janin spent a few years in St. Louis. The Trappists also labored in Missouri, after leaving Kentucky; and noted among them for missionary work were Fathers Ignace, Guillet, and Dunand.

84. Both Fathers Lusson and Janin went to Louisiana, whither Father Barrières had gone after leaving his vicariate. In Louisiana Father Barrières labored for thirty years. Others who worked in this region were Fathers Claude Gerboy, de l'Espinasse, Henry Boutin, John Vaugeois, Vincent Genin, Louis Buhot, and Gabriel Isabey, a Dominican. When the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803 its ecclesiastical jurisdiction was given over to Bishop Carroll. He appointed John Olivier his vicar-general, and then the Belgian priest, Father Nerinckx. Later, he promoted Father DuBourg to this position. Rome showed its approval for this vicar-general by appointing DuBourg Bishop of Louisiana in 1815. This year also saw the end of the era of John Carroll, for he died on Sunday, December 3, 1815, in his eighty first year.

9.
Conclusion

85. There is no doubt that the French missionaries made a great contribution to the Church in North America through their labors among both the colonists and the natives. They traveled over a broad expanse of territory to spread the Kingdom of God among the Indians and to keep the light of faith alive in the hearts of their fellow Europeans who had come to this land. These men of God encountered innumerable difficulties in their evangelical labors. Wars among the natives played havoc with the progress of religion. Then, too, there was the rivalry between France and Britain, which resulted in the French surrender of Canada to the British and of Louisiana to the Spanish. At the same time the suppression of the Jesuits took away the mainstay of the missions in New France.

> As Canada fell to England and Louisiana to Spain, the work of the Jesuit missionaries in French North America ended. Their record is a chapter of American history full of personal devotedness, energy, courage, and perseverance; none can withhold the homage of respect to men like Jogues, Brebeuf, Garnier, Buteux, Gravier, Allouez, and Marquette. Men of intelligence and education, they gave up all that civilized life can offer to share the precarious life of wandering savages, and were the first to reveal the character of the interior of the country, its soil and products, the life and ideas of the natives, and the system of American languages. . . . What was accomplished, was effected by the indomitable energy of individuals—the Jesuits, laboring most earnestly and continuously, effecting most; the Sulpicians ranking next; then the Priests of the Foreign Missions; and the Recollects. (*Narrative and Critical History of North America*, Justin Winsor, ed., Boston and New York, 1884, IV, 289, 290.)

86. From 1763 to the time of the French Revolution no French priests were permitted to enter British territory. At the time of the upheaval only about thirty-four exile priests were received in Canada. In the meantime, the British colonies had been formed into a new republic and to these United States came refugee priests to carry on the work of the ministry. Theirs was a task that entailed much labor, but was, nonetheless, of beneficial results to the Church in America.

> O, Truly fortunate revolution in France! every true Catholic in this country may exclaim, which has brought us so many edifying and enlightened instructors! There is no part of the United States that cannot bear witness to their zeal, and should not be eternally grateful. Where is the youth of a liberal education, sincere piety and correct morals, who has not been formed by some one or more of the clergy of France, emigrants to this country? Where is the College or Catholic establishment that has not been, or is not now under their direction? They have taught our youth, they have instructed and enlightened our people, they have directed thousands in the way of heaven, . . . to say all in one word . . . for these twenty-five years back, they have contributed, principally contributed, to render the Church in this country what it now is. (*Laity's Directory for 1822,* 103.)

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Study Outline

Gerald C. Treacy, S.J.

If by chance this Study is considered too long to be discussed at one meeting, it is suggested that a part of the Study be selected for study and discussion.

Part 1. Paragraphs 1-24

French missionary work began in North America with the arrival of the two Benedictines Dom Guillaume Breton and Dom Antoine, chaplains in the Cartier expedition of 1535. They did some missionary work around Quebec but with little success. In the 17th century French priests again appeared on the continent. Four Franciscan Recollects were with Champlain and spent ten years in the mission field. The viceroy and the missionaries appealed to the Jesuits for help. In 1625 the Jesuits came to Quebec. In 1629 the English took Quebec and thus ended the mission of the Recollects and Jesuits.

When in 1632 the territory was restored to France, the Jesuits returned. They took over the entire mission field with the exception of Acadia which was entrusted to the Capuchins. Father Le Jeune and Father Nouë were the pioneers. Father Le Jeune began the series of annual reports now known as the *Jesuit Relations*. By 1637 there were twenty-three Jesuit priests and six brothers in the region. From their centre in Quebec these men went far afield to work among the natives, to the Abenacki in Maine, the Hurons in Upper Canada, Michigan and Ohio, the Iroquois in New York, the Ottawa in Wisconsin and Michigan, and the Illinois in Illinois. By the end of 1668 there were missions among the Five Nations. Toward the end of the cen-

tury the work was practically abandoned. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 ended the missions to the Iroquois.

Questions

When did French missionary work begin in North America?

How successful was the first effort?

What does Thwaites say of the Recollects in the 17th century?

Describe the beginning of Jesuit missionary endeavor in 1625.

What territory did the Jesuit missioners cover?

What are the *Jesuit Relations?*

Were the Hurons easily won to the Faith?

Give an account of Father Rale's apostolate in Maine.

Where did Father Isaac Jogues labor and with what result?

Describe Father Simon Le Moyne's missionary activities.

Part 2. Paragraphs 25-27

The western missions of the French stretched from the Great Lakes to the Gulf and were generally east of the Mississippi. They were known as the Ottawa, the Illinois and the Louisiana missions. In 1663 Bishop Laval appointed Claude Allouez, a Jesuit missioner, vicar-general of the traders and natives of the northwest Allouez died in 1689 having baptized 10,000 Indians and preached to 100,000.

James Marquette came to New France in 1666. He was appointed to the Ottawa mission in 1668. In the spring of 1672 he and Joliet undertook the historic expedition to find the Father of Waters. On his descent down the mississippi he visited the Illinois Indians. It was he who established the mission of Kaskaskia, which became the centre of Jesuit missionary activity in Illinois.

La Salle took possession of the territory of the Mississippi valley in the name of the King of France in 1682. Three of the first priests sent there were massacred on the shores of Texas. Meanwhile priests from the Quebec seminary

were doing missionary work along the Mississippi. When Iberville brought a new colonizing expedition to Louisiana in February 1699 he had the Recollect Father Douay with him. When Douay returned to France he was succeeded by the Jesuit Paul Du Ru, who accompanied Iberville up the Mississippi and wrote a journal of the trip.

Questions

What was the extent of the western missions of the French?

Why was this known as the Ottawa territory?

Give an account of the work of Allouez and Marquette.

What was Cadillac's plan for the establishment of Detroit?

Besides the Jesuits what other priests labored in the Illinois missions?

What was the dispute between the Jesuits and the seminary priests?

Describe Father Paul Du Ru's missionary activities.

Was New Orleans the first settlement in Louisiana?

How did the New Orleans settlement prosper?

What was the scope of Jesuit missionary activity around New Orleans?

Part 3. Paragraphs 58-86

French missionary effort slackened after the English conquered New France. But the missions were not entirely abandoned. After 1763 only three Jesuits remained in that part of the continent that today is Louisiana, Illinois and Michigan. However, French and Canadian priests remained active in the territory involved in the American Revolution. Outstanding among them was Father Pierre Gibault. With the end of the war came the problem of jurisdiction in the new nation. On June 9, 1784 Father John Carroll was appointed prefect-apostolic of the Church in the United States. At the time there was a dearth of priests and Father Carroll had little choice in the selection of men for work in the field.

On November 6, 1789 Baltimore was made a diocese with

Father Carroll as bishop. During his episcopate about 100 French priests came to the United States and labored zealously in the east and the west. For twenty-six years Father Matignon served the Church in Boston and New England. He persuaded Father John Cheverus to come to America. He became Boston's first bishop. At times the French priests in New England ministered to the Catholics of New York and New Jersey. French priests too were serving the Catholics of Pennsylvania. Maryland likewise benefitted by the devotion of the French clergy. Their activities reached into other southern states as well.

Not all the French priests remained in the east. French names are found on the missionary roster of Vincennes, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee and Michigan. The French missionaries made a fine contribution to the Church in North America, traveling over a vast stretch of territory to spread the Kingdom of Christ among the Indians, and to keep the light of faith alive in the hearts of their fellow-countrymen.

Questions

What was the effect of the English conquest of New France on the missions?

How many French priests labored in America during Bishop Carroll's time?

What aid did the Sulpicians give the first bishop of Baltimore?

Who were responsible for the spread of the Faith throughout New England?

How far south did the French priests carry their apostolate?

Describe Father Flaget's work at Vincennes.

Who was the pioneer missionary in Kentucky?

Who was the first bishop of Louisiana?

Mention some of the difficulties that faced the French missionaries.

What removed the mainstay of the missions in New France?

A Note on the Author

The Rev. Leo F. Ruskowski was born in Wilmington, Delaware, February 21, 1907. He made his studies at St. Elizabeth's School, Wilmington; St. Charles' College, Catonsville, Maryland; St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland. Ordained in June 1936, he became a member of the Society of St. Sulpice the following year (1937). Then he took graduate studies in history and education at the Catholic University, Washington, where he received his doctorate in 1940. Since then he has been teaching at St. Charles' College, Catonsville, Maryland.

The study outline and questions for "French Missions in North America," were formulated by Gerald C. Treacy, S.J., who has prepared study club editions of various encyclicals.

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